

Understanding the Transatlantic Slave Trade

Learning objective: To understand the historical context and the human impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Read the text carefully below. Use evidence from the passage to answer the questions in full sentences. For the Greater Depth questions, think critically about the consequences of these historical events.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, the Transatlantic Slave Trade caused immense suffering. Millions of African people were forcibly taken from their homes and transported across the Atlantic Ocean to work on plantations in the Americas. This system treated human beings as property rather than individuals with rights. Families were cruelly separated, and enslaved people were forced to endure harsh conditions and brutal labour. In Britain, many people began to campaign against this injustice. Notable figures, including former enslaved individuals and dedicated campaigners, spoke out against the practice. They held public meetings, wrote pamphlets, and petitioned Parliament to demand change. Their persistence eventually led to the 1807 Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, which made the trade illegal within the British Empire. However, the fight for full freedom continued for many years after. Today, historians study this period to ensure we remember the courage of those who fought for freedom and to recognise the profound impact this history has on our world today. Learning about this dark chapter is essential for promoting equality and human rights.

Word bank: Abolitionist · Enslaved · Transatlantic · Humanity · Perspective · Legislation

1. According to the text, what happened to the people who were taken from Africa? (Literal) (2 marks)

2. In which year did the British Parliament pass the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade? (Literal) (1 mark)

3. Why might the author describe the Transatlantic Slave Trade as a 'dark chapter' in history? (Inferential) (3 marks)

4. How does the passage suggest that the fight for freedom was not finished in 1807? (Inferential) (2 marks)

5. Explain why it is important for historians to study the Transatlantic Slave Trade today. Justify your answer. (Evaluative) (4 marks)

Draw: Draw a commemorative monument that represents the concept of freedom and equality, including a symbol of remembrance for those who fought for justice.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are Ellie the elephant, who has a perfect memory for stories. Write a diary entry from the perspective of an abolitionist in 1807. Explain why you feel it is necessary to campaign against the trade and what you hope the future will look like for everyone. Use rich vocabulary to express your empathy and determination.